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SHIVA YOGINI LALLESHVARI

Prof. Chaman Lal Raina

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SHIVA YOGINI LALLESHVARI

(Sublime Journey to Consciousness)

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A WORD TO THE READER

It is natural to the people living in exile in their own country, faced with decimation of their cultural icons, with their culture and history being constantly under mined to be concerned about the preservation of their ethinical tradition and to make efforts for its dissemination especially to the younger generations. More than their loss of homes and hearths, land and other material positions it is the looming loss of identity that perturbs the Exiled Minority of Kashmir.

Indeed preservation of this thousands-of-years old culture is a question that should concern the whole nation of India. It haunts the people who were the only inhabitants of Kashmir a thousand years ago and have been forced into a life of exile today.

In Kashmir history this situation i.e. exile, has arisen several times during the last six or seven centuries. History, infact, has been repeating itself rather frequently in Kashmir. Hence the imperative for fortifying the identity, ethos and culture of the exiled Kashmiris is of great importance, not only for their sake but also for the sake of national integrity.

Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra has started publication on icons, aspects, symbols and facets of the glorious ethos of Kashmir, both past and present to address these imperatives. The history, traditions and essence of Kashmir would thus be preserved and at the same time broadcast to increase the awareness of the public as well to prevent the distortionist design of defacing them.

Kashmir has been the major centre of Sanskrit language and literature. It has birthed great savants Vasugupt, Somanand. Utpaldev, Abhinav Gupt, Kshemendra, Mammat, Kalhan Pandit. Jagdhar Bhat, Bilhan, Vaman, Rudrat, Anand Vardhan, Udbhat, Kayat, Bhamah, Kshemraja, Jonaraja, Shrivara, Shuka and others. These were Shaiva philosophers, scholars, thinkers, historians and grammarians who rose from the Kashmir soil established their credentials the world over and gave new directions to the society

and community. The Ancient shrines, cultural centres, seats of learning, grand temples, ashrams etc. are wittness to the grand archeology and architecture of Kashmir and invite attention of the antiquarians inciting them to further investigate and inquire into this grand legacy.

As a first step towards this great endeavour of enlivening the grand traditions, throwing light on the great savants, bringing to fore the foremost icons of this glorious traditions, the Publications Division, Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra is bringing out this series of Public utility, informative, introductory monographs with the twin objectives of raising public awareness level of the people and facilitating further research into the areas that are being allowed to pass into oblivion, under obvious designs. Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra's efforts are aimed at stemming this deluge threatening to drown the real identity of Kashmir.

Each of the monographs shall focus on one subject, issue, icon or symbol. Brought out on a no-profit-no-loss basis they shall be priced to be within the reach of all and shall be written in an easy comprehensible style. The aim is to present facts, life and works in simple comprehensible manner avoiding scholastic didactism, which has prevented access of the lay public to many of the grand literary, philosophical works. At the same time many artifacts of art, culture and lore have not seen the light of publication. Such facets shall also be highlighted to bring out the multifaceted character of this lore and legacy. It is hoped that the endeavour shall attain its objectives with your involvement, interest, initiative and participation for in the ultimate analysis culturo-ethical endeavours are only as good as the participatory response from the general community.

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Florida International University, USA
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A GREAT HERITAGE

Kashmir is the Land of *Rishis* and *Yogis*. Saints and Sages adored the circutous valley of Kashmir, with-Love and Spiritual genius.

Kashmir Shaivism did influence the way and life of **Lall Ded**. She introduced the *Vak*, in the Kashmiri syntax, phrase and idiom, on the pattern of four line verse of the *Vedic Mantra*. She realized the efficacy of the *Vak* of the *Vedic* tradition, and embedded it in the *Trika* way of Life.

The *Vakhs* of **Lalleshvari**—the great *Lall Ded* of Kashmir have come down to us through oral tradition. These Vakhs have been translated in Sanskrit for the first time in the 18th century, by Pandit Bhaskar Razdan of Kashmir. It is considered as the first book on the *Lall Vakh* written in the Sharada script. That became the bed rock for the western indologists to understand the inner-spirit of Lalleshvari. We can say that Lalleshvari excels among Kashmiri spiritual poets, who experimented with a great truth about Divinity. She expressed her experience in her native language Kashmiri. Lall Ded deserves every appreciation, in making the native language as the medium of her spiritual dialogue with the masses. Her concern was to convey the great legacy of the *Vedas*, and the *Pratyabignya*, through her *Vakhs*. Certainly, Lall Ded is the born poetess of masses, having a global perspective, within the orbit of human consciousness. She happened to be a *Rishika* of the fourteenth century, who realized SHIVA as the Divine Being.

Divine Being has been assigned the name of *Ishvara*, in the Vedic tradition. The same *Ishvara* is the *Brahman* of the *Upanishads, Shakti* in the *Agamas* and *Tantras*, and *Bhagavana* in the *Puranas*. Kashmir Shaivism takes Divinity as *Shiva,* which is some unseen power higher than *Sadashiva*. For those, who believe in the *Murti*, Sadashiva is the Deity with form, who is revered in the *Shiva-Lingam*, as Shankara/ *Mahadeva*. The *Sahsranamas*

give one thousand attributes to each deity. The main *Puranik* deities are *Ganesha, Shiva, Vishnu, Shakti* and *Surya.* The *Vedas* explicitly say: "*Na Tasya Pratima Asti*". Ishvara, being *Sachhidananda* in its true nature has no *Pratima*/ idol or is not an icon in any form. How can the formless have the form? The Vedic Rishi enquired: "*Kasmai Devaaya Havishsha Vidhema*"—who is the *Deva*/ Divine Being, to whom we need to offer our oblations?

"*Devaaya Tasmai Namah*"—was the answer to the intuitive mind of the Rishis. *Veda Vyasa* conceived that the *Ishvara* of the Vedas do possess a form, hence *Shiva Lingam, Shalagram Shila, Shri Yantras* were put to the *Prana-Pratishttha*, thus uniting the image with the essence of Supreme Self, under the injunctions of the *Brahman Granthas*. With a firm belief in the *Siddha Pithas* and the *Shakti-Pitthas,* the sacred spots of Kashmir became the source of inspiration for the *Moorti Puja.* For those who could not reach the *Siddha Pitthas,* a *Shivalaya* was erected for *Puja/* worship purposes. It became a visual aid for the devotees. It did create some problems, though metaphysical in nature, which *Lalleshvari* –the great *Yogini* of the fourteenth century A.D. wanted to solve, after great deliberation on the *Shaivistic* system in its original *Trika* form and content.

That religious thinking needed some spiritual input, to convince the then Hindu psyche that Shiva is not an idol alone, but pure consciousness in essence. A great spiritual revolution was undertaken by the great *Shiva Yogini Lalleshvari, then.* She offered VAKHS in lucid poetic language. Hence the world in general but the Kashmiris in particular inherited the great *Vakhs*, as said by Lall Ded, in her own innovative meter of the Vedic system, derived from the *Vak* tradition of the Vedas.

She was a great thinker, with a sense of humor and wit, as a great poetess should have to her merit. Her views are associated with love and reason, for which she is revered as the **Lall Ded** and **Lall Arifa**. She encouraged the spiritual awakening, which is of course, a social phenomenon for human values to live together, as

been recognized in India as well as in the west. She is recognized as the great Spiritual Master of Asia. She is verily a *Rishika/* woman seer, of the Vedic lore and a recognized Yogini of the Kashmir *Shaiva* system.

Lall Ded is born Shaivite

The elders in Kashmir would often quote: '*Nagr 'u Neerith Pandrentthan*, as the birth place of Lall Ded'. Lalleshvari was born in the 14th century at *Pandrenthan,* some eight kilometers to the southeast of Srinagar. Some say she was born at Sempore, nearer to Pampore, in the valley of Kashmir. Lall Ded was a gifted *Yogini.* She was an inspired woman, with a highly developed understanding about the *Trika* way of life. She was, no doubt a great female *Rishi*, who had the great potential in conveying the spiritual truth— '*Shiva* alone exi*sts* ', which corresponds to the Vedantic aphorism, '*Sarvam Khalu Idam Brahma*'—all this is *Brahman*. Shiva of the *Trika* philosophy is *'Brahman'* of the *Upanishads*. The *Shaiva Agama, Pratyabijmya and Spanda* constitute the *Triadic* doctrine of the *Trika* or Kashmir Shaivism. She spoke of "Truth about Eternity". She did give her message with the beauty of expression, like the *Abhangas* of the great saints of Maharashtra. Her words carry the essence of the *Shaivistic Bija-Mantras*, within the very orb of the *'Vakh'*. Her *Vakhs* are not merely a composition of words, but a source of spiritual knowledge for providing peace and mutual harmony. Her Vakhs are for spiritual enlightenment, and stand for the search of that Absolute, which is formless but manifest. That Absolute is *'Nirakara-formless'*, but with the attributes of being *Truth-Consciousness-Bliss*. Lall Ded is still considered as the strong pillar of solidarity, a bridge between physical activity and soul of spirituality. She is revered as the symbol of religious tolerance in the twenty first century. She is *Mantra-Drishta/* a spiritual seer, with a vision to see the Absolute within self and around, for universal awareness. Her spiritual integrity is woven with the eminence of Vakh, which exists even today. It is current, giving a vibrant

atmosphere for understanding the oneness of Supreme spirit, which is all *Prakasha/Shaivistic* illumination.

Many women in the ancient India have contributed towards the popularization and enhancement of spirituality for the welfare of all. *Vagambhrini* is considered as the *First Mantra-Drishta* of the VAK tradition. But Lalleshvari is a *Yogini* of Shaivistic doctrine, who gave a rosary of VAK- Kashmiri typical verses, embodying the essentials of" *Shivah Eva Sarvam Chaitanyam*—Shiva is all consciousness with life-urge, in the principle of spirituality." This was a quest in her, to communicate this spiritual methodology, to understand Shiva in every word, deed and action. This is the principle of *Satyam*—the doctrine of Truth, which she taught in the applied form, to live according to the Kashmir tradition and spiritual norms. After *Lalla Ded*, Kashmir has not produced any *Shiva Yogini,* so far.

The First Spiritual Poetess

The pond at Pampore, known as *Lalla Trag* is a testimony to the fact that Lall Ded used to go on the banks of the pond to fetch water for the house- hold. She was married at an early age, as used to be the Kashmir tradition those days, but her marriage was not a successful one. Her mother-in-law was very unkind towards her. Lall Ded was not happy with her mother-in-law's attitude. She did not reveal until the day was ripe to express her spiritual depth. She expressed with the sense of humor and wit:

Hond Maaran Yaa Katth
Lalli Nal Watth Tsali N'u Zaan'h

हॉंड मारन या कठ
ललि नलु वठ चलि नु ज़ांह

"Be it a fat sheep or a little one; Lalla is destined to have a pestle-stone in her food", so said Lall Ded to her friends, known as *Yarbal Kak'ini* or neighboring ladies in Kashmiri Language. These

lines are poetic in form, which received the proverbial recognition within the meaning of resentment, but in satirical language. The language and expression of this poetic statement is very lucid and heart touching This is the beginning of an era, in Kashmiri poetry, while giving vent to her hurt feelings, that have been expressed in a two line verse. She was a woman of the Vedic tradition to live the standards of life, according to the Kashmiri ethos, style and dress. But it was she, who left her house in search of *Shiva*—the supreme godhead, who is the creator-sustainer and destroyer of the phenomenal world. Things do happen in life for better change.

When did she leave her home and hearth in quest of the Absolute Truth? The dates are not certain. It is not certain, what type of dress she wore, was it a traditional Kashmiri Pandit woman's *Pheran*, a *Tarangu* - *Poots* and *Zooz*, or just a gown of *Pheran* type to cover her physical sheath. Her physical form was an embodied soul, within the realm of *Ananda*. She was a virtual temple of Divinity in form. Through her intuitive faculty, she spoke the *Vakh*, to tell about the nature of *Shiva* /Divine, *Shakti*/ manifestation and *Anu* /embodied soul, being the quintessential of the *Trika* philosophy. The legend says that she wandered in the valley of Kashmir, to see Shiva at every spot. She saw Shiva in the jungles, streams, mountains, in the shrines, in huts and houses of the common man. She became a realized soul. Her words of realization should be taken as the *Spanda* within *Vedic Shruti*. The Vedas say that the *Ishvara* is everywhere. That is *Sattva quality* in the *Moola Prakriti*, according to Lall Ded. That is *Chit* – consciousness of the *Upanishadic Brahman*. That is in the alphabets of the *Aum Namah Shivaya Mantra*. Feeling of Shiva's fragrance every where and trying to be one with that sublime force, which constitute the cosmic effulgence, was the *Mantra* for Lall Ded. It does vibrate through the following Vakh of Lall Ded.

Shiva Chhu Thhali Thhali Wuchhan
Mow Zaan Hiyond T'u Musalmam .
Trukai chhuk T'u Paan Parzaan
Soi Chhay Sahibas S'uit Zaan

शिव छु थलि थलि वुछान
मौ ज़ान ह्योंद तु मुसलमान
त्रुक छुख तु पानु परज़ान
स्वय छय साहिबस सुत्य ज़ान

Lall Ded lived a universal mind, in seeing Shiva in every embodied soul. She felt *Shaivistic* radiance both in animate beings and in inanimate manifestation. Her way of vision was not limited to the personification of the Divinity, but her way was to feel Shiva's tenderness in every molecule of manifestation.. Lall Ded is revered by both *Muslims* and *Hindus*. Hindus revere her with the names of **Lalleshvari,** Muslims with the name of ***Lall-Arifa,*** but she is popularly adored as ***Lall Ded*** or ***Lall Ma'ij***. *Ded* in Kashmiri language is the epithet of the grand-mother. Mother is called as 'Ma'ij' or 'Moaj' in Kashmiri language. When we go through her Vakhs, we come across the word **Lall** and **Lalli**, according to the sentence structure of the *Vakh.* It is thus clear, she is **Lall,** the great mystic of the fourteenth century. She is a *Jivan Mukta*—a liberated soul, as the definition of the *Jivan Mukta* goes in the Hindu philosophy. It can be said, on the basis of Lall Vakhs that *Lall Ded* realized Shiva within her physical body through mind, wisdom and soul. What a wonderful spiritual awakening within human birth of Lall Ded stands for! This is truly a sublime journey to consciousness. Her belief is firm, her feeling is charming, her faith is determined. But her attitude to life is all quest, and she lives in higher consciousness and gives the Vakh for the realization of the True self. It is said that *Lall Ded* is a living *AUM.*

Realizing *the Spanda/*vibration of Shiva was her main concern, as she saw Shiva in the sound structure of AUM. This is

the concept of *Prameya/* object in the *Trika philosophy*. A poetic ecstasy about Shiva is seen, when she says: **'Shiv Chhu Thhali Thhali Wuchhan.'**— Shiva is witness to all. Shiva is everywhere. She confirms this realization in the present Vakh:

Paanas L'aigith Rowukh Mey Ts'u
Mey Ts'u Chhaandaan Lusum Doh
Paanas Manz Yeli Dyuntthuk Mey Ts'u
Mey Ts'u Tey Tse T'u Paanas Ditum Chhoh

पानस लॉगिथ रोवुख मे च़ु
मे च़ु छ़ांडन लोसुम दोह
पानस मंज़ येलि ड्यूंठुक मे च़ु
मे च़ु ति च़ु ति पानस दित्तम छ़ोह

What a nice poetic description has been given by Lall Ded in this Vakh! It is an expression of gratitude to Shiva, for the *Anugraha/* Supreme grace. The discovery is within for Lall Ded. In an ecstatic mood, *Lalla* sees *Shiva* in the nerve and cell of her own being. Her purpose of life has been solved. "*Chhandaan*" is for soul-searching process and "*Dyuntthuk*" refers to the mystic transparency, where the worldly experience and spiritual awareness meet. There is a poetic flow of sublime words, which built an artistic medium to convey the philosophic truth. That is Shiva-consciousness, which is the essence of her Vakhs. A spiritual transformation is felt, through the vibrations of Vakh. **Vak** is the Eternal word, an expression of the Divine manifestation.

About Vakh

Vakhs bear a spiritual inputs within the meaning of higher realization. The Lalla-Vakhs, are *Yogic* in spirit, *Shaivistic* in philosophy, and *Mantrik* in idiom. An objective purpose is seen in her message, through these Vakhs. She has understood the divine word AUM, and its application in life.

"Vak Vai Brahman"[2] — *Vak* itself is the Absolute Truth. Vak is verily, *Brahman.*

Rigveda (1: 3-21)

"Yaavad Brahman Tishtthati Tavati Vak"— all that what is Brahman, is in the VAK.

—Rigveda (10:114-8)

"Para Vak Sarvodita"— transcendental Vak is illumined every where

—The Krama Stotra

"Vagbhava Bija"— the Eternal seed is sprung from Vak.

— Maharatha Manjari

"Chatvari Vak Parimita Padani" — the Four *Pada/* essential constituents are of the Vak. The highest aspect of **Vak** is inherent in the **Vedic Para**—the transcendent, as commented by the celebrated grammarian Nagesh Bhat of the 18th century.

'It is the **Vak**, which has its being in the realm of *Ishvara*', says Abhinavgupta in the *Prayanta Panchashika.* Vak is like a Yogic lotus. Vak is AUM. It conveys the profound significance of the Supreme syllable, which is the mother of all articulate sounds, and symbolic of the existence, and even beyond the three dimensions of the existent world. Vak with blooming *Chakras* embraces all the *Gunas* of *Prakriti*, when invoked through AUM.

In the ancient past ***Vagambhrini*** visualized eight *Mantras*, which form the basis of the Vak of the Vedic tradition. Vagambhrini was the Rishika—a woman Rishi, who through her intuitive faculty, saw the vision of the Truth, in the form of VAK. She Visualized the "Devi Sukta" in the eight Mantras. These eight mantras form a section of the 125th Sukta of the 10th Mandala, in the Rigveda. It is in the *Jagati* and the *Trishtup Chhanada/*meter. These Mantras are highly Yogic in spirit, spiritual in content and philosophic in approach. Since Vak is always associated with *Manas/* mind and *Praana/* vital breath, so the Vak stands for understanding the cosmic mind, universal breath,

true consciousness in omniscient Divinity. What a wonderful meaning of the VAK has been given in the Vedas! It seems that the Devi Sukta must have been prevalent at the time of Lalleshvari, who gave it the Kashmiri form of Vak. It is Divinity in manifestation, within the force of the *Word* as *VAK*. This is the beauty of the **Vakhs of Lall Ded.** The emphasis is put on the harmony between the Divine and human being. Human being is to get engaged in *Karma* within the norms of *Sanatana Dharma.*

Visual Experiences

Lall Ded was the disciple of *Sidha Srikantha,* popularly known as ***Sedh'u Moal.*** Lalleshvari has been very influential in shaping the Kashmiri culture and spiritual ethos on the pattern of the *Shiva-Advaita* of the *Trika* system. She applied it in her life pattern. That was her *Dharma.* Higher realization is related to the phenomenal world and for the spiritual understanding about Divinity, on the basis of direct experience. Direct experience is either based upon the intuition or received under the guidance of a true *Guru.* There is limit in every action, as the human being is subjected to all the possible weaknesses. General experience tells the vividness about the worldly life. A positive approach to life, is required to consider every action, on the basis of its merit.

Human sympathy is needed for giving the healing touches to any suffering person. This is the human ethics, which we need to uphold in our behavior. An unwelcoming situation was confronted by her, in the early years of her married life. So she says:

Doad kyaah Zaani Yas No Baney
Gam'uki Jaam'u Haa Valith Taney
Gar'u Gar'u Phiir'us Peyam Kaney
Dyunthuum Kaa'nh Nu Panni Kaney

दोद क्याह ज़ानि यस नो बने
गमुक जामु हा वॅलिथ तने
गरु गरु फीरुस प्योयम कने
इयूंठुम कांह नु पनने कने

Only the sufferer knows, how he/she is hurt. Suffering is the result of getting humiliated. It can be physical torture, mental agony or receiving the mal-treatment from the family or society. Suffering is pain within. Lall Ded received unhealthy treatment from her in-laws. Thus she says in the present *Vakh* that she is "wrapped with robes of sorrow", which normally a married Pandit woman never conveys in public. She says that she went around, but none favored her. None took her side, rather she received rebukes in return. What a suffering it was for Lall Ded! What bad treatment it was! The society needs to be transformed. Narrow vision needs to be changed for the better. For upholding the spiritual way of life, Lall Ded wants to understand the true nature of Shiva.

Aami Pan'u Sadras Naavi Chhas Lamaan
Kati Bozi Dai Myon Meti Diyi Taar
Aamyen Taaken Ponya Zan Shamaan
Zuw Chhum Bramaan Gar'u Gatchh'u Ha

आमि पनु सॅदरस नावि छस लमान
कति बोज़ि दय म्योन मेति दियि तार
आम्यन टाक्यन पोन्य ज़न शमान
जुव छुम ब्रमान गरु गछ्हॉ

She affirms that she is towing the boat with a rope, but made of tiny untwined yarn. She wishes that *'DAI'*- the Divine would help her to ferry across. It seems that her efforts are gaining no ground. It is like an effort of putting water in the unbaked utensils, where it pours and does not stay. She longs and longs for

going to her eternal abode, but the difficulties and obstructions are in the pathways. Her object is to be with the flame of Spirit, linking her efforts to infinity. For that purposes, she reached to the conclusion, that going to the origin should be her main object of human birth.

Further, Lall Ded views the life through every angle. This is her logical approach to understand the different sets and modules of life. She sets some examples, which are very pertinent, in the daily behavior. She portrays the poetic picture of two different approaches to life. This is in relation to *food*, the daily need of the embodied souls. She explains, as she views two approaches:

Gatulah Akh Wuchhum Bvachhi S'uit Maraan
Pan Zan Haraan Pohney Waaw - Laah
Neshbodh Akh Wuchhum Waazas Maaran
Tan'u Lall B'u Praaraan Chhenyam N'u Praah

गाटुलाह अख वुंछुम ब्वछ्‌ सुत्य मरान
पन ज़न हरान पोहनेह वावु लॉह
न्यंशब्वद अख वुछुम वाज़स मारान
तनु लल बु प्रारान छनेयम नु प्रॉह

She has observed a wise person keeping himself hungry, nothing eating, therefore is starving. The food is ready there for him, but he resists to eat. He is getting pale, withering and falling like the leave of the autumn season, as do take place in the month of *Poh* / corresponding to the month of November. *Poh* is the fall season of Kashmir, when the leaves get detached from the tree. She considers him a *Gaatul* /wise person. She also noticed a fool, beating his cook, for not preparing the sumptuous meals. What a contrast in the human behavior! This episode became an eye opening for Lall Ded. She weighed both the situations in the context of life-urge, in life-standards and its impact on the life maintenance. She gives a moderate way to both of them. This is what a *Rishi* does, to teach Vedic *Ritam*- the right path. Therefore, she says:

Khen Khen Karaan Kun No Waatakh
Na Khen'u Gatchhak Ahank'airi
Somuy Khey Maali Somuy Aasakh
Sami Khen'u Mutsranai Barnen T'airi

ख्यनु ख्यनु करान कुन नो वातख
न ख्यनु गछ़ख अहंकॉरी
सोमुय ख्ये मालि सोमुय आसख
समि ख्यनि मुच़रनय बरुन्यन तॉरी

The *Upanishads* say : *Annam Vai Praanah*—the vital force of *Prana,* functions of the breath are associated with food. Eating too much will in no way help a person to live longer, rather it would create more ailments. If a seeker willfully abstains from taking the food, that would also harm him. That person can never practice Yoga, which is a discipline of life, within the definition of Yogic *Chitta-Vritti.* Therefore, food must be taken in moderation. It would certainly lead a seeker to reach the highest destiny. All the bolts would be opened, through *Sadhana*. It needs physical vigor and mental strength to walk on the spiritual path. For Lall Ded, food is essentially for survival of the physical , but not the ultimate end. That ultimate is bliss, known as *Ananda*. The wisdom of a person is in laying emphasis on the soul-searching attitude to life, instead of giving importance to the food, or the sensuous life.

She understands the pulse of the common man, who is more particular to satisfy the base desires of the senses, instead of balancing it with ultimate search for Shiva. It is useless to speak to such a person, if he/she is not inclined to search the Truth in *Shiva –consciousness*. She analyses it in this Vakh:

Mudas Gyaanu'itch Kath No Waniizey
Khars Gor Din'u Raavii Doh
Yus Yuth Karay Su Tyuth Swaray
Krerey Kari -zyini Panun Paan

मूडस ग्यानुच कथ नो वॅनिज़े
खरस गोर दिनु रावी दोह
युस युथ करे सु त्युथ स्वरे
केरे कॅरिज़्यनु पनुन पान

It is of no use to explain the spiritual thoughts about God-realization, to an ignorant person. The ignorant would never appreciate the spiritual state of experience. All that would go in vain like feeding an ass with brown raw sugar. It depends upon the inclinations of a person. The thought is responsible for the action. It is no use for a *Guru* to waste his energy in such spiritual communications, for which any *Shishya/* listener is hard to find. We should in no way put ourselves in the well of ignorance. *Karma/* action is followed by its result. Bearing this suggestion in mind, we need to develop the spiritual path of life.

The physical is seen, metaphysical is understood and transcendental is realized , he who absorbs AUM within. The powers of the mind get more strengthened, who is drawn towards the recognition of Self, during *Pranayama*— the inhale and exhale exercise with AUM. Shiva is AUM and AUM is Shiva. She explains in the Shaivistic way:

Dihchi Lari Daari-Bar Troprim
Praan Tsoor Rotum T'u Dyutmas Dam
Hridaychi Kootthri Andar Gondum
Om/Womki Chobuk'u Tulimas Bam

दिलचि लरि दारि बर त्रोपरिम
प्राणु चूर रोटुम ति द्युतमस दम
हृदयचि कूठरि अन्दर गोंडुम
ओमकि चोबुकु तुलिमस बम

We need to bolt the doors and shut the windows of the

physical sheath of our body. The *Prana* or the vital breath are hidden there. We need to put the five fold *Prana* under control, lest that should disturb the mental harmony. It is all to be done within the recesses of our hearts. The whip of AUM, is needed to make the mind and the *Prana* function in unison. There is need of the application of AUM in our physical strength, mental serenity, and innate nature to achieve the *bliss.* We shall get a vision of AUM, and that is Shiva state of *Ananda.* It is possible to be absorbed in *Yoga,* rising from *Muladhara Chakra* to the *Brahmarandra,* to identify with the *Nirvikara/* unchangeable, immutable Shiva. Shiva is all consciousness, and Lall Ded prepares the masses for that higher consciousness.

If we are seeking attunement, then preparation for meditation should be a continuing effort. Meditation helps for the realization of Shiva state of mind, through *Japa* and *Ajapa Gayatri.*

Azapa Gayatri Hamsa-Hamsu Zapith
Aham Traivith Suyi Ad'u Ratth
Yemi Trova AHAM Suy 'i Rood Paanay
Buh Nu Aasun Chhuyi Wopdeesh

अज़पा गायत्री हमसु ज़ॅपिथ
अहम् त्रॉविथ सुय अदु रठ
येम्य त्रोव अंहम् सुयं रूद पानय
बुह नु आसुन छुय व्वपदीश

Gayatri is to be invoked with '*Hamsa*', the reversed '*Soham*' Mantra. That is *Ajapa-Japa.* It is the constant vibration of AUM, through our breathing system. It is the creative idea of the Absolute. The sound of AUM is the seed-force that evolves in all its expansion. AUM is the transparency of the Divine effulgence of *Soham* and *Hamsah.* Egoistic- AHAM is to be shunned, during constant Japa. There should not be any trace of egotism that 'I am the *Karta*' —the performer, but being the

instrument of the Divine. Just ignoring the **I-ness** of body, is verily to become THAT. This is the *Upadesha*--a teaching, emphasizing not to be the doer but to be a conscious worker of the Divine, in making life meaningful with spiritual rhythm. *Ajapa Gayatri* is beyond transmutation. It is verily, AUM in every soul, as a reflux of the Divine.

A specific Yogic system is known as the *Tsandraayun Tsaapun*. It was known to Lall Ded. Under this practice, the sensational body gets dissolved, only the pure spirit remains. It is said that Lall Ded was an adept Yogi in that *Samadhi*. She believed in the right entering of the *Shudha Vidya*—Divine knowledge par-excellence that transforms the whole personality. It entails a deep realization that becomes the cause of transformation. It is transformation from man to Yogi, from Yogi to the *Jivan Muktal* or the liberated soul. Through their *free-will* they get reincarnated as the Saviors of humanity. It is the *Svachhanda* attitude of the soul, according to the Trika philosophy. She makes the aspirants understand the pursuit of the Unknowable.

Anduri Aayas Chandr'y Gaaraan
Gaaraan Aayas Hihehn Hih
Tsuy Hai Naaraan, Tsuy Hai Naaraan
Tsuy Hai Naaraan Yim Kam Vih

ॲन्दरुय आयस चुन्द्रुय गारान
गारान आयस हिह्यन हीह
चुय हय नारान चुय हय नारान
चुय हय नारान यिम कम विह

She affirms and sees the moon within. The moon of coolness is known as the *Chandra Nadi* in the Yoga. She searched within and found the rhythm in time and space. This should be taken as *Narayana*, which is not different from Shiva in Absolute

consciousness. It is only because of the *Prakriti* that we view the Divine in various forms and moods, in various sounds and syllables. The physical, metaphysical and transcendental lives in Narayana- the sustainer, within AUM sound . Therefore, these are but the Vibrations of the Divine. '*VIH*' in Kashmiri languages stands for different sensations. Lall Ded says:

Parun Svalab Paalun Dvarlab
Sahaz Gaarun Sikhim T'u Krootth
Abhyaasik Ganirai Shastra Motthum
Chetan Anand Nyeshchain Goam

परुन स्वलब पालुन द्वरलब
सॅहज़ गारुन सिखिम तु क्रूठ
अभ्यासुक गनिरस शासत्रर मोठुम
चीतन आनन्द न्यशचय गोम

It is easy to study the scriptures. No doubt, it would take the considerable time to go through the rudiments of the *Shastras*. But it is too difficult to comprehend the message of the *Shastras* into the ordinary practice. It is very subtle to understand the quintessence of the SAHAJ/ the immediacy of the Truth. The quest for the Reality is not an easy task. "I tried to make every effort to put that into practice, what the *Shastras* have taught me", says Lall Ded. She made every possible effort to get the glimpse of Sikhim/Sukṣhama, which is subtle transcendence. She did make a determination to be conscious of her actions, which eventually made her realize *Chetan Ananda* or the ultimate bliss of awareness. This can be learnt from a spiritual Guru.

Role of Guru

Guru is preceptor. Guru is some thing greater than the *Shishya.* Even if a *Shishya*/disciple excels in spirituality, still in the eyes of *Shishya,* Guru is always great. Guru is a spiritual institution in itself. Literally, *Guru* means some thing heavy and great, with a

deep understanding of spirituality. Guru is something extra-ordinary, more precious than the wealth of this phenomenal world. For Lalleshvari, **Siddha Moal** happened to be the Guru, who initiated her in the Monosyllable AUM. It is believed that the *Guru Mantra* or Mantra given by a Guru should not be made public. Lalleshvari happened quite opposite to this man made norm. She said that AUM is her *Moola Mantra* and that was given to her by *Siddha Moal.* We learn from this approach of Lall Ded, that spiritual knowledge is for all. Every person must be shown the path, which would lead to immortality.

A Guru helps in evolving the human mind develop for the universal outlook. That is verily, within the spiritual potential of the Guru. He offers the spiritual values, and prepares the disciple for *Brahma Jnana, or* transcendental knowledge. The Guru teaches the Ultimate and demonstrates its methodology. He removes the veil of *Avidya*- ignorance. It is for the disciple to make the earnest effort, for making the journey towards consciousness. Lalleshvari fulfills the promise for giving enlightenment to all through her sublime Vakhs. Ideal Gurus do possess the universal mind. They reveal the Truth, and explain the pathways of spirituality. That is why, we have a bunch of *Vakhs*, spoken by the spontaneous vibrations of Lall Ded. Her words are prophetic. Her Vakhs are filled with the Eternal wisdom for spiritual understanding.

Eternal Wisdom

Shabda/ Divine word is for blooming of the eternal wisdom. Word is the expression of the inherent strength to express the flow of thoughts for performing any action, whether mundane, spiritual or transcendental. The Vakhs of Lalleshvari are integrated within the source of the Vedic wisdom. Her Vakhs are the gift of time given in the fourteenth century, to fulfill the gap between the Vedas and the Hinduism evolved around the *Puranic* tradition. She was an earnest '*Traveler of the Time*,' to integrate the *Vedic Samhitas* with the *Trika Darshana,* which is

the vibration of the Word. Lall Vakh is the poetic form of the *Aarsha Shabda*— Vedic word. The poetic form of message is more forceful than prose. Action oriented life has been the motive of the Vakhs of Lall Ded. Lall Ded created her own spiritual world, which is centered at Shiva, surrounded by AUM. Shiva has created the human being to become universal in his/her life pattern in relation to the phenomenal world. The *Prakasha* is one, which has spread around. Nothing can upset one's mind, if one thinks of All pervading Shiva. Lall Ded says: **"Yimav Tsun Tim Zeevanti Mukkta"**— they alone are the liberated souls, who really respond to the Divine word.

Not a thin fine line can be drawn within her Vakhs, to measure it as a ritualistic philosophy of idol worship. That is seen in the *Smarta* tradition, worshipping the *Devatas* with form. Higher realms of spirituality can be viewed in seeing the *Shiva* within creation, according to her Vakhs. Lall Vakhs are the open houses in the field of spirituality. It offers every possible opportunity to the seekers, to verify that *'Open Chamber'* for themselves. Every body can have a look at it, and then have his/her viewpoint about that Divine Chamber. But we have to make an effort to reach that *Chamber*.

Aayas Watey Ga'yas N'u Watey
Suman Svathi Manz Luusum N'u Doh
Chandas Wuchhum T'un Haar Naa Atey
Naavi Taaras Dim'u Kyaah B'uh

आयस वते गॅयस नु वते
सुमन स्वथे मंज़ लूसुम नु दोह
चंदस वुछुम तु हार ना अते
नावि तारस दिमु क्याह बुह

Lall Ded is confident in saying that she has come from the right path. Lall Ded affirms that she did not reach the source, in the early stages of the *Sadhana*. Her returning to the *Chaitanya*-

primordial eternal consciousness, remained unfulfilled. She became helpless, the time duration of the life span never cared for her ineffective efforts to reach the destiny, at that time. Her day was thus over. It was all murky, as dusk had then enveloped around her.

She further elaborates: "I was caught in the mid-way. I could not complete my journey, to reach the goal and see the Divine. I could not cover the distance of *Svath / Setu*/the embankment. My journey to Divine awareness could not be completed within that designated hour. Since I had to reach, the other alternative was of the '*Naavi-Taar*' taking help from the boat man, who would ferry me across. Hence the state of helplessness was felt by me." The same is true for every seeker of *Jnana* /knowledge in the early phase of *Sadhana* in life. Though the origin is the same, but going back to that origin is not certain for all. It needs a strong spiritual commitment.

Spirituality

Lall Ded in no way is subscribing to any ritualism, based on superstition. She was not a bigot, but was very evolved soul as the *Rishi* and a *Yogi* should be. She was universal in her thoughts. Whatever she said about the *Murti* or *Murti puja* should not be taken as an attack on any religious denomination. She wants to rise from that fundamental stage of *Moorti Puja* to the highest, termed as '*Para*—the transcendental', as described in the *Pratyabijnya* system. She is against the *Hatha*, as would have been prevalent, in the then religious ethos. She suggests to a *Hoota* Pandit, with this Vakh:

Deev Vataa Deevur Vataa
Petth'u B'on'u Chhuyi Ikka-Vaatth
Pooz'u Kas Karakh Hut'u Bataa
Kar Manas T'u Pavanas Sanghaatth

दीव वटा दीवुर वटा
प्यठ् बोनु छुय ईकवाठ
पूज़ कस करख हूट बटा
कर मनस तु पवनस संगाठ

The icon of a Devata and the temple are made of rocks and stones, so where is the difference! But it was to convey the message that Shiva transcends beyond the *Shivalingam,* and not to bind Shiva only in name within the icon of a stone. The *Bhatta/Pundit* should have an integral approach to Shiva, where *Shiva* and manifested Shakti are always in unison. Lall Ded seems to be always charmed with the name of Shiva. It is in the ecstasy of joy to uphold unity within "*Manas* —the mind and *Pawan*—Five fold Yogic breath". That is the call of spirituality. This is the secrecy about nothingness. It is also known as being evolved in the cave of eternity. It is to find mind within the balancing point of *Shiva* and *Jiva* towards infinite bliss. Therefore, it would be an irony to get involved with the ritualistic Puja, without realizing the efficacy of the *Pranayama,* where mind and breath will go together in search of Shiva.

Shunyuk Ma'idaan Kodum Paanas
Mye Lalli Roozum N'u Bo'dh N'a Hosh
Vezuyi Sapnis Paanay Paanas
Ad'u Kami Hili Phol Lali Pamposh

शून्युक मॉदान कोडुम पानस
मे ललि रूज़ुम नु ब्वद न होश
व्यजुय सपनिस पानय पानस
अदु कमि हिलि फ्वलि पम्पोश

The Shunya—void is to be understood, and realized within. Lall Ded did it. She says: " All the intellect vanished away, all the body consciousness was gone. It then enlightened

me." The men with virtue seek refuge in the wisdom of sages, to get themselves freed from the shackles of ignorance. Divinity exists for maintaining the rhythm of the world. The spirituality should be taken as the music of life, to feel the vibrations of *SOHAM* -I am That Shiva. Lall Ded presented this subtle thought with her torch, lit from the *Prakasha* / illumination of Shiva. It is because of her determination that Lall Ded could see the Yogic lotus bloomed amidst the '*Hil*' or lake weed around her. Therefore, we see the *Shaivistic* concept emerging even today that there is hope of recognizing '*Jagat Shunyam Cha Ashunyam Cha*'. It is both void through awareness and non-void through perception. Lall Ded further explains *Shunya*:

Gvaras Pritschom Saasi Latey
Yas N'u Kenh Vanaan Tas Kyaah Naav
Pritschaan Prirschaan Thhachis T'u Loos'is
Kehnas Nishi Kyaahtaam Draav

ग्वरस प्रछ्योम सासि लटे
यस नु कैंह वनान तस क्याह नाव
प्रछ़ान. प्रछ़ान थॅचिस तु लूसुस
कैंहनस निश क्याहताम द्राव

Absolute Truth can be learnt from the Guru—the spiritual preceptor. It needs firm faith in Guru's words. She declares that she had a Guru, and she asked him the single question: "*Yas n'u Kenh Vanaan Tas Kyaah Naav*— How can we give name to the Nameless? He who can not be limited by name and form, how can *that* be addressed or invoked? I asked my Guru many a times, I got tired and exhausted. Later, I learnt that some thing evolved out of nothing. It was all puzzling but great and wonderful." The Guru directed her in seeing that *Nameless* within Self. It decoded the Vedic aphorism : "*Kasmai Devaya Havisha Vidhema*"-- to whom or

what Divinity, should we offer our oblations? The answer is within the Self. Lall Ded taught with clarity that there is some Supreme Power, which she learnt from her Guru.

G'oran W'onnam Kunuy Watsun
Nebr' u Dopnam Andruyi Atsun
Suy Gav Lalli Mye Vakh T'u Watsun
Tavai Mye Hyotum Nangai Natsun

ग्वरन वोननम कुनुय वचुन
न्यबरु दोपनम अन्दरुय अचुन
सुय गव ललि मे वाख तु वचुन
त्वय मे ह्योतुम नंग्य नचुन

Her Guru instructed her to go inside, and to see through the inner movements of the *Spanda*/vibrations. That is to go deep inside, through Yoga, and examining inner being. The Scripture says: "*Yathaiva Brahmanda Tathaiva Pinda*—as is the *Brahmanda*, the Macro, so is the *Pinda*, the micro. It was "*Kunuy Watsun*", only one word OM, which is the witness of all her doings, whether physical, mental, gnostic or spiritual. It was to train the mind for recognizing the *Atma* or *Shiva*. It was to become a Yoga adept, for seeing the *Brahmanda*—universal flux within. That was the initiation for her in '*Para Vak*' associated with the '*Watsun*'. She danced in the recesses of her heart, then. *Watsun* is the *Apabhramsha* of the Sanskrit word *Vachana*. Watsun carries an in-depth meaning in Vakh. It is known and adored as the '*Aapta-Vachan*' or enunciation of the Mantra given by *Guru*.

Here seems a pun at the word, **Nangai Natsun**. To me it does not convey that Lall Ded roamed naked. She was not properly dressed or was not dressed at all. The Sanskrit word NANGA means without any limb. ATMAN has no limb, but it is pure spirit. It is both affirmative and intuitive, being the abode of ecstasy, it is *Ananda*. It suggests that she transcended the physical body, but her every realm of action was filled with pure spirit. "*Chaitanyam*

Eva Jagat Sarvam", used to be said by the great masters of the *Trika* thought, and she lived that life. Kashmiri word for nudity is ***N'onuy/Neth'u N'on,*** without having any robes to cover body. But the Vakh refers to *Nangai Natsun,* which is the mystic expression of being in tune with the *Akasha*, as defined in the *Thirty -six Tattvas* of the Trika philosophy. Shiva is *Digambara*, always absorbed in YOGA. *Dik* means the pathways and *Ambar* means the space. She happened to be *'Yogini'*, considering all her self absorbed in Shiva as *Digambara.* It suggests that a Yogi should never keep the *Jnana* hidden. Thus the resulting experience was different from the experience of the ordinary life. The subject matter of Shiva being the universal consciousness was no secret for her then. Her robes were all in the reflections of AUM. She did not conceal, what she realized about Shiva. That is Shiva within AUM.

Meaning of AUM

AUM is the essence as well as the source of all creation. AUM is the constant or immutable syllable in the sound-structure showered by the Divine, for realizing the Truth about Absolute. Divine works through sounds. AUM is known as the *Shabda-Sharira* of the Divine. Since Divine has no body, but sound has the effect of subscribing consciousness to eternity. It is spoken by the human speech, the voice of the Yogic awareness. A whole mysterious world is locked up within AUM. Interestingly, AUM liberates the devotees from the whirl pool of this phenomenal world. It scans our vibrations to make us nearer to the Absolute, which is wonderful. Divine in nature is Shiva, and that lives in our hearts, to remind us of AUM. The Triadic nature of AUM is for realization of the spiritual strength for every noble action. It is possible through *Sadhana*/ a communion with the Divine.

Lall Ded was not only for reciting of the Mantra AUM, but for creating its pulsation in every nerve and cell of the human being. To her AUM is the mirror of self within. It is an expansion of the desire to live for realization. It is '*Atmano-*

Mokshartham Jagat-Hitaata Cha', being an applied form of AUM. An aspirant would live with AUM for his or her *Moksha/Nirvana*, and at the same time would help the humanity, through *Mantrik* way of life, as exhibited by the **Shiva Yogini Lalleshvari.** She would sing and play in ecstasy at the cosmic mystery caused by AUM or Vedic Pranava,which is not different from Shiva of the transcendent nature. The scriptures sing the glory of AUM as:

Akaaro Vishnur-uddishta Ukaarastu Maheshvarah-
Makaarastu Smrito Brahma Pranavastu Trayaatmakah

AUM is the *Pranava,* and is the Primal sound, this is considered as the seed of the Vedas, being Eternal. Every *Mantra* is filled with the quintessence of AUM. A of AUM, is *Vishnu* the sustainer, U is *Maheshvara*, the force of dissolution, and M is *Brahma* the creator. These three sounds put together become a monosyllable AUM. That is the Vedic *Pranava*. Lall Ded is the embodiment of AUM. She explains the application of AUM within Pranayama in this Vakh:

Akuy OMKAR Yus Nabhi Daray
K'ombay Brahmaandas Sum Garey
Akh Suy Mantth'ir Tsetas Karey,
Tas Saas Manth'ir Karan Kyaah

अकोय ओमकार युस नाबि दरे
क्वमबे ब्रह्मांडस सुम गरे
अख सुय मंथुर च्यतस करे
तस सास मंथुर करन क्याह

A person, who concentrates on the monosyllable AUM at the navel, and with the process of *Pranayama*, retains his/her breath upto the *Brahmarandra,* is walking over the bridge of all the *Chakras*. That person needs to remember this *Mantra* for good. For him, there is no need to recite the thousand *Mantras.* AUM echoes and reverberates. Shri Krishna in the

Bhagwadgita says: " *Giraam asmyakaksharam*— I am vibrant *Monosyllable* in all the sounds. That monosyllable is AUM".

Lall Ded is very much after the Yogic practice. Yoga helps to have bridges over the different modes of body conscience, mental fluctuations, cognition of the breath, within the flow of various thoughts. Thousand Mantras can be taken as invocations to the various Devatas during *Homas/Yajnyas.* Concentrating on the AUM during *Pranayama,* would lead a person to realize the Immortal self. It is taken in the three phases of *Poorak*/inhalation, *Kumbak* / holding of the inhaled breath, and *Rechak* is exhaling. Pranayama keeps the body, mind and soul in perfect harmony.

Further Lal Ded says:

Lall Buh Lus'is Tshandan T'u Gaaraan
Haal Mey Kormas Ras Nish Tiy
Wuchhun Hyotmas T'airi Dintthmas Baran
Mey Ti Kal Ganeyam Zi Zogmas Tatiy

लल बु लूसुस छ़ांडन तु गारन
हाल मे कोरमस रसनिश तीय
वुछुम ह्यतुम तॉर्य डींठ्यमस बरस
मे ति कल ज़ि ज़ोगमस ततीय

"As a seeker of Shiva, I went every quarter searching and waiting for Him. My persuasion was very strong, and it was steady as should be. I tried to see Shiva, but the doors leading to that ultimate goal and destination were bolted every where. Not a single space was left over by me to locate *THAT.* The longing for Shiva was so intense that I stood very vigilant trying to get *That* glimpse any where, at any time. I peeped through and fixed my eyes to find Shiva".

Lall Ded was all wakeful to recognize the projection of her mind, within her own *Atman*—spirit. She could observe the awareness enshrined with the life-pattern for the attainment of

Shiva. That was her sole purpose. It can be termed as the spiritual aim of human life in the *Ishvara-Pratyabijna.* It is possible to evolve, to create *Ichha Shakti*/ will power to attain the recognition of the pure Spirit within. Lall Ded had the right reason to believe as she could not find Shiva in any image or icon. Lall Ded was living the life of Shiva consciousness. She was the spirit within Shiva, so she advises that a devotee of the Supreme Shiva need to transcend the forms.

Shiva is always a witness to human activity,. He abides in every thought and in every vibration. But we need to identify Shiva in our body movements, and thought channels. Lall Ded advises through this Vakh:

Asi Pondi Zosi Zaami
Vyethhi Snaan Kari Tirthhan
Wuh'ier Wohras Nonuyi Aasihay
Nishi Chhuyi Ti Parzu Naavtan

असि प्वंदि ज़्वसि ज़ामि
व्यथि सुनान करि तीरथ
वुहुर्य वॅरियस नोनुय आसि हे
निशु छुय तु परज़ुनावतन

Shiva is by our side. Shiva is not away from us. Spiritual life is to live like the lotus petal amidst water. Only a man of realization feels that Shiva is abiding in the human consciousness. Shiva is present in all the seasons, rather the seasons are His creation. This consciousness transports an aspirant to the higher state of infinity. Where there is no bondage, there is ultimate *Shanti* / peace. Apart from being spiritual, a human being has to see the different sensations like laughing, sneezing, coughing and yawning like the normal persons do have. The dynamism of life is important for living the life in perfect health. He has to take the holy dip, at the *Vitasa* Tirtha. The Veda says: "*Aimbitme Naditame Devitame Saraswati*

-- the river is an object of veneration. A *Tirtha* is associated with a river, the water resource. Here, the "*Nonu 'yi Aasihey*" means remaining *vivid* in all manifestation, keeping nothing hidden. So is Shiva, every where. One needs to create a direct link with *Prakriti*/ nature, as nature is not different from Shiva, which reflects the *Sahaj* / innate state of mind. She says:

Sahzas Sham T'u Dam no Gatchhe
Yetchhi No Praavakh Mokhti dvaar
Salilas Lavan Zan Milith Gatchhe
Toti Chhuy Dvarlab Sahaz Vetsaar

सहज़ शम तु दम नो गछ़िहे
यछ़ि नु प्रावख म्वखती–दार
सलिलस लवन ज़न मिलिथ गछ़ि
तोत्य छुय द्वरलब सहज़ व्यच़ार

The truth is not attained only through *Shama*/ self-control and *Dama*/ the continence. A seeker may undergo the strict discipline of *'Shama and Dama'*, which give the spiritual strength. The *Mukti* or *Nirvana,* which is also *Kaivalya* is not based on the will power alone. It needs some thing higher than aspiring. Destroying the ego is putting the soluble salt in the oceanic water, where the egoistic individuality of 'salt' is gone for ever and unity is attained. *Shama* and *Dama* at times also make a seeker egoistic. Therefore, it is difficult to express what the *Sahaj-vichaar* could be. *Sahaj Vichar* is spontaneous thought, which is directed towards Shiva, where there is no trace of duality. It is verily, the timeless approach filled with the *Spanda*/vibrations. To have the *Anughaha or* Divine grace, the aspirant needs to understand the thought vibrations within.

When the *Sahaj Vichar* of AUM develops, all the channels leading to that Eternal light are opened without any delay. The difference between time and space are seen no more. *Abhyasa*— constant practice is recommended for realizing the

Supreme Being for receiving the *Sahaj Vichar*. Full determination to reach that goal is needed to achieve that status of being one with *Sahaj Vichar.* This can be done with the concentration of mind alone She emphasizes :

Abhya'isi Sya Vik'aisi Lay Vyethhu
Gagnas Sagun Myul Sami-Tsrataa
Shunya G'ol Anaamaya Moto
Yihoy Vopdiish Chhuy Batta.

अभ्यॉसी स्व व्यकॉसी लय व्यथू
गगनस सगुन म्युल समि च्रटा
शून्य गोल अनुमय मोतू
यिहोय व्वपदीश छुय बटा

Self-Evolution is the focal point, for the human being. Through constant practice, one gets merged with the Infinite – Self. What is that? It is to get the gross form merged with the formless *Gagana/ Akasha* or space. That is to feel the pulsations of the infinite nature of Divine. Infinite energy is in the *Shunya* or *Akasha*. Due to the intensity of *Sadhana* and constant practice, the void melts away, and the pure consciousness is visible in the transcendental, eternal and all pervading Shiva. Lall Ded is affirming with great authority that this alone is the *Upadesha*—a well meaning instruction. Lall Ded with her Yogic eye experiences a treasure of originality, which she wants to share with all those, who are close to her thoughts. Therefore, she refers the word *Batta*. Batta should not be taken as the community, but those who are well versed in the scriptures. While some of them preferred to be involved with the rituals mostly then, rather than aspiring for the *Sakshatkara* or the vivid realization of Shiva.

Loob Maarun Sahaz Vetsaarun
Drog Zaanun Kalpan Traav
Nishi Chhu Tai Dur Mo Gaarun
Shunyas Shunyah Milith Gav

लूब मारुन सॅहॅज़ व्यचार
द्रोग ज़ानुन कल्पन त्राव
निशि छुय तय दूर मो गारुन
शून्यस शून्याह मीलिथ गव

Says Lall Ded with all conviction and truthfulness that *Shunya/ Void* has merged with the Void. Her guidance is based on her experience. She does not speak, what she does not realize. Her knowledge is not based on inference only and fused with perception alone, but based on the *Shabda-Praman/*verbal testimony, received from the Guru like **Sidha Mol**. It was her intuition from the inner- depths of mind and spirit woven with AUM, that helped her to speak about Shiva- realization. Though the killing of ego or destroying the attachment and greed is very difficult, yet an aspirant soul has the potential to overcome that weakness. It can be attained through *Sadhana*, where there is *Shunya*-- an awareness of silence and swiftness of mind to reach the endless *Prakasha* associated with *Vimarsha*. This Yogic evolution would surely lead us to the *Shunya in experience*.

Mind creates the thoughts, nourishes those thoughts with determination and accomplishes them with actions. This is the general phenomenon with every human being. But *Atman* experiencing *Shunya* or void is the transcendental stage for a man of the spiritual standing. That *Shunya* has the greater significance, as Lall Ded reveals. It corresponds to the *Atharva-Vedic* concept of the Primordial energy, which is the causeless cause of all existence. For being in the Shiva state, the ego is to be destroyed in word and deed. That is *Shunya* state of consciousness,

where *Purusha* and *Prakriti*, *Prakasha* and *Vimarsha, Shiva* and *Shakti* meet for mutual identity.

Lall Boh Tsayas Svamana Bhaagabaras
Wuchhum Shivas Shakti Milith Tu Wah
Tati Lay Ka'irmas Amrethsaras,
Zindai Maras T'u M'e Kari Kyaah

लल बु च़ायस स्वमनु बागबरस
वुछुम शिवस शक्ती मीलिथ तु वाह
तत्यं लय कॅरमस अमर्‌यथ सरस
ज़िंदुय मरस तु मे करि क्याह

Lall Ded has entered the '*Gate of the Eternal garden*', witnessing both Shiva and Shakti in unison, within flame of Truth-consciousness. It seems that there is a grand integration of Immortality. An absolute sight it was really for her! To see that spinning of *Shiva* and *Shakti*, through the wheel of conscious mind, is a wonderful expression of Divinity! It created a superb impression on the psychic self of Lall Ded, which is the presence of Shiva and Shakti in the *Sahsraara* during Yoga. She is interested in full absorption with that twin forces of Immutable realms. She experienced that awareness of the cosmic self which is *Poorna Prakriti.* She verily, attained that vision of perfection.

Within the spiritual tradition of Vakh, we need to forget our pride and then prepare ourselves for regaining the blissful state. She advises to cut the knot of ignorance, and release it in shaping one's own destiny within the realm of *Prakasha*. Apparently, it may look some thing rewarding to be in the egoistic self, but pride is a deceit, a hindrance for the spiritual evolution.

Chhandaan Loos'is Paan'uy Paanas
Chhepith Gyaanas Votum N'u Koonchh
Lai K'armas T'u Waitsis Althanas
Ba'ri Ba'ri Baana T'u Chevaan N'u K'uenchh

छ्यंडान लूसुस पानुय पानस
छूयपिथ ग्यानस वोतुम नु कूँछ्
लय कॅरमस वॉचुस अलथानस
बॅर्य बॅर्य बानु तु च्यवान नु कूँछ्

She mentions: "I questioned myself not once or twice, but many a times, how to get the essence of the mysterious Self, which is the source energy of all the manifestation. Once the veils of ignorance were removed, I absorbed that Pure essence was blooming in my own being. It resulted in the *Advaita* and *Pratyabijnya*–the doctrine of true recognition of the self. That is *Samvit*, according to the *Trika* thought of Kashmir. All the imperfect fluctuations of the mind act as false witnesses before pure spirit and wither away before *Samvit*. Those are really great, who wear the '*Mantle of Truth*' in the form of aura not for their own guidance alone, but for others as well. A few realized soul drink the elixir of spirituality filled within the jar of Immortality, which is hidden in the cave of one's heart. That is really, what we need to aspire. The spiritual abode is pure consciousness, where there is complete cosmic evolution in the undisturbed unilateral thought. It is the celestial treasure, to be viewed in every mood of life. But only a few make that effort. She says in her ecstasy:

Vakh Manas Kval-Akyal Naa Ate
Tchhvapi Modri Ati Naa Praviish
Rozaan Shiv Shakti Naa Atey
Motiyay Kenh T'u Suy Wopdiish

वाख मनस क्वल अक्वल ना अते
छूवपि मोदरि अति ना प्रेवीश
रोज़ान शिव शक्ती ना अते
म्वतिये केंह तु सुय व्वपदीश

That *Rahasya*-secret is not known by mere utterance of

the *Mantra*, as the mind is engrossed with fluctuations. *Kulachar*- the teaching in the Tantric system, *Akulachar*- monistic way of the *Agamas* can not fathom that secret. *Mudras*, the body postures do not penetrate in that *Rahasya*—mystic happenings. For the purposes of realization, there is need of complete silence and coolness of mind. *Shiva and Shakti* the two universal principles described in the *Puranas* do not live there. These are the pure vibrations of AUM. Lall Ded teaches that the Divine do not possess any form. It is pure consciousness, to be addressed by different denominations. Her emphasis is on the Vedic truth that Divinity is One – "*Ekam Sad Vipra Bahudha Vadanti.*" Lall Ded affirms it. He who is trying to meditate on those lines, keeps his mind cool to receive the higher revelations, for self-awareness and spiritual awakening.

For achieving that higher state, an aspirant needs to have his/her mental tendencies like that of a gardener, who looks after the garden with all care, considering the seed, its time of incubation, its flowering in his mind and putting the garden in its finest look.

Man Push Tai Yetch Pusha'ini
Baav'ukiy Kosum La'igzes Puzey
Shishras Go'ad Dizyes Zal Daini
Tchhvapi Mantu'r Shankar Svatma Wuzey

मन पुश तय यछ पुशॉनी
बावुक्य कोसुम लॉग्यज़स पूज़े
शिशरस गॉड दिज़्यस ज़लदॉनी
छूवपि मंथुर शंकर स्व आत्म वुज़े

It requires a great dedication. That dedication of the gardener needs to be translated in its visual expression of making the garden into a beautiful spot of attraction, with blooming colorful flowers on the tree branches. It is gardener, who does all this, but he offers it to the Divine. That is real *Puja*/worship with

the awareness of conscience. Gardener is the aspirant. The garden is the whole manifestation , which needs to be approached with love and service. That is *Shiva Kevolaham* or in the modern context the service for the humanity, and preserving the natural assets. This can be done by the unruffled state of mind for seeking spiritual transformation. Meaningful life is meant for developing oneness with the rest of the manifestation. Where there is spiritual enlightenment, there is Shiva.

Lall Ded is for cultivating the efficacy of '*Tchhavpi Mantra*' in silence. It is the '*Mantra within Silence*' about Truth. We need to awaken ourselves. The sole purpose of Mantra is liberating the humanity from gross ignorance.

Maarukh Maaru Booth Kaam Krood Loob
Nat'u Kaan Barith Maarnay Paan
Manuy Khen Dikh Sva Vyatsaar Sham
Vishay Tihund Kyaah Kyuth Dvar Zaan

मारुख मारबूथ काम क्रूद लूब
नतुय कान बॅरिथ मारनस पानय
मनुयं ख्यन दिख स्व व्यच़ार शम
व्यशाय़ तिहुंद क्युथ द़ोर ज़ान

Needed desire is the definition of *Kama.* The sensual obsession should be shun, including anger and greed by an aspirant of Yoga. Otherwise, these would turn into missiles and weapons, sufficient to kill one's personality and one's link with Shiva. The noble thoughts learnt from Guru, should be spread for the well being of humanity. This is an approach to be nearer to Shiva. Desire obstructs the growth of devotion and desire can not co-exist with *Sadhana.* Divine love is unconditional. Every action must be directed towards the great effulgence of Shiva. One should not get highly emotional in life, but to live with peace, harmony and balance. Rather a flavor of Divine taste should be cultivated for making this world a wonderful place

to live in, without any pits and falls.

Lall Ded considers the *Jnana Marg* as the knowledge circuit in electrifying the impulses in the Divine play of the Universe. She is equally connected with the ordinary way of life, for reaching the far off destination. It is approachable. The means are the life's pursuit of purity. The thinking part must be charged with *Shiva-Spanda*/vibrations as a fulfillment to live with spirituality. That is the only reality. It is the essential recognition of the soul. She affirms:

Gyaan Marg Chhai Haak Va'ir
Dizyes Shama-Dama Kreyi Poni
Lam Chakhr Posh Prani Kreyi Daar
Khen Khen Mvachiy Vaarai Chhen

ग्यान मॉरग छय हाक् वॉर
दिज़्यस शम दम क्रेरि पोन्य
लम चुखुर पोश प्रानि क्रेयि दार
ख्यनु ख्यनु मोचिय वारय छेन्य

The path of knowledge is like a kitchen garden, where a house- holder grows the vegetables to meet his requirements. But this small garden, needs to be irrigated regularly. It needs to be ploughed properly, taken care of neatly and fenced spiritually. This is the approach of working with *Shama*/self-restraint and *Dama*/ continence. The '*Lam Chakra*' is the Yogic *Mooladhara Chakra*, situated at the base of the spine, as discussed in this Vakh. This is the spot, from where the *Sushumna* goes up. The *Mooladhara Chakra* is of four petals. It needs to be irrigated with the pious ideas, with noble *Vrittis*/impulses. When we meditate upon our own self, rising from the *Mooladhara*, all our thought channels get focused on the Divine awareness. A distinctive characteristics of the *Yogic Sadhana* is to transmit the signals of consciousness in every nerve and cell of the body. The radiance of consciousness touches the body, piercing into mind, evolving the soul for realizing the Supreme self.

To have a vision about the future, and to help the present in shaping its spiritual path, has remained a Shaivistic concern for Lall Ded. She subscribes all the words of Vakh to Supreme Shiva, which had remained the vital religious and philosophic thought of Kashmir. She links her psyche with *Guru Parmeshvara*, and addresses that Divine Power:

Hey Gvaraa Parmeshvaraa
Baavtam Tsey Chhuy Antar-vyod
Dvashvai Vopdaan Kanda-Pooraa
Hoo Ha Kavu Turun Ha Hah Kavu To't

हे ग्वरा परमीश्वरा
बावतम चे़य छ़ुय अंत्रर व्योद
द्वशवुय व्वपदान कंदु पूरा
हू हा कवु तुरुन कवु तोत

She affirms the Sutra of *Guru Gita* that Guru is *Parmeshvara*—the True Divine Being. Exalted one is the Guru, to whom she addresses for bestowing her the True knowledge, which is spontaneous flow of the AUM – the seed of inner experience. Both the '*Ha- Ha* and *Hoo – Ha*' are but the *Prana/* inhaling –*Apana/* exhaling forces of life in the Yogic process. Both the breathing forces have its source from the lung region in the body, also known as the '*Anahat Chakra*', which is the fourth mystical *Chakra*. The short breath is cold and the long breath is warm. Why so? It is the mystery, that can well be understood through in-depth purity of Yoga. Breathing with the measured unit of time in the perfect harmony of the *Mantrik* syllables is desired during *Sadhana*. For the Divine, it is the quality of expansion, and a sweet wholeness and perfection.

Epilogue

All philosophy is concerned with a strong relation

between the fundamental truth of existence, perceived through the senses and the forms in which existence presents itself in the human experience. Philosophy is more intellectual, while the rituals are the presentation of one's firm faith towards one's *Deity* and the concerned religious tradition. Rituals have a psychological bearing in the minds of those, who believe that the Divine gets pleased with such prescribed acts, as have earned ground through traditional impacts and religious injunctions. Lalleshvari neither believed in occultism, nor in the iconic worship. After much deliberation, she concluded that the Divine is every where, more so in one's own consciousness. Direct experience is an approach for having a dialogue with the Divine. It is of vital importance for Lall Ded. The question before Lall Ded is of direct experience, instead of what has been passed through ritualistic tradition. Direct experience is making a discovery into the path of Divinity. Basically, Lalleshvari teaches in her Vakhs— " *Wisdom in Truth.*" That is the origin of all sounds, of primal creation, and ultimate destination/merger with Shiva. She teaches the methodology of transformation, aiming at the training of the mind for realizing the Truth. Shiva is the subject matter of the Vakhs of Lalleshvari. More deeply, she affirms that the Divine belongs to all. There is no place for hatred, jealousy, pride, egotism, or any sort of evil in the guise of religion. A man is spiritually rich according to what he is, and not according to what he has inherited. On this basis, the *Lall Vakh* is the living religion of spirituality, which seems to be more true to *Ekeshvarvad/* monotheism. *Shivam* / Goodness is the best criteria, to be followed in seeing the *Sundaram/* the Divine beauty face to face. It is the effulgence of the human consciousness, to be pure in life, transparent in thought and subtle in spirit, in day to day life to be in the breath of *Satyam*/the Truth.

Par Tai Paan Yemi Soam Moan
Yemi Huyuh Moan Den Kyuoh Raath
Yemisuy Advaiy Man Sa'impun
Tamiy Dyuntthuy Svar Gvar Nath

पर तय पान यॆम्य सॊम मोन
यॆम्य ह्युव मोन द्यन क्योह राथ
यॆमि सुय अदवुय मन सॉमपुन
तॅमीय द्यूंठुय स्वर ग्वर नाथ

He who sees no difference in the spirit, either of one's own self or of another being, is a realized soul. He who sees that are all equal in the eyes of Divine and thinks that joy and sorrow are but the phases of life, is approaching towards the realm of *Shiva*. He who has become free from the limits of self and from dualism, gets spiritual strength in seeing the effulgence of *Shiva*. That is the state of merging with the God of gods/ *Shiva* in Essence. That *Truth is* known as *Svara Guru Natha*. Shiva is sound AUM, of the Guru Mantra, and that is the Ultimate Being. The Absolute awareness is in seeing Shiva all the manifestation being the Guru—spiritual preceptor and Natha, the transcendental Reality.

"All knowledge merges with that Unknowable
All is manifestation of the Omniscient Shiva"
Aum Shri Lalleshvaryai Namah

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SANJEEVANI SHARDA KENDRA

(A brief Introduction)

Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra was established on Sharda Ashtami 2nd September, 1995 in Jammu Anand Nagar Bohri to the splendid memory of the grandeur of Sharda Mata and to strengthen the nationalists especially the exiled community of Kashmir and to remind them of their duties.

Sharda symbolises Saraswati the Goddess of wisdom, vision and knowledge. Devi Saraswati and the Goddess of firmness pluck and power and Devi Durga (Parvati) are all subsumed in Sharda Mata. The objectives underlying the establishment of Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra is to rekindle the erstwhile glory of the Goddess Sharda the world over.

To accomplish this resolve as well as to preserve our glorious heritage Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra has defined the following specific objectives.

1. Construction of a Sharda Bhawan.
2. Collective observance of major social, cultrual land religious events.
3. Arrangements for vocational training.
4. Facilitating research activity in fields of culture and history
5. Creation of a website for dissemination of knowledge.
6. Teaching and popularization of Sharda script
7. Establishment of a comprehensive library.
8. Creation of a Publication Division.

In the first phase we have erected a conference hall-Sharda Bhavan, on a plot of land acquired for the purpose, to carry out the regular activities of the Kendra.

Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra is running planned training programme to make the youth self-dependent. The aim is to make the Kendra a multifaceted organisation. Thus the Kendra has imparted primary training in Electronics-Radio-T.V.

assembling land repair to about hundred youths, in a one-year course programme. Presently these youths are either self-employed in the trade or have joined industry by the dint of this training.

Sharda Institute of Computer Education has been opened in the Kendra premises. The Institute trains students in different aspects of Computer Education and techniques through a variety of Computer Courses. Over 400 students have received computer training to date. The institute has a well-equipped Computer Laboratory. Sixteen Students are trained in one class at a time.

The Kendra has actively taken up research activities. To strengthen the cultural identity of Kashmiri Pandits, debates, lectures and seminars on archeology, history, philosophy, ethics, language, literature, script (Sharda) and folklore are being organized. Sharda Pustakalaya, a library has already been opened. A special section on Kashmir to house a comprehensive collection of books is envisaged under the auspicies of the Pustakalaya. The construction of a separate hall for housing the library has already started.

The Kendra has organized several Samohik Yagneopavit Samaroh. So far Yagneopavit Sanskar of 124 children has been performed under the programme. The aim is to mobilize the community, increase the awareness as well as to discharge a social and religious obligation.

Under the Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra, Mohaotsav Committee organizes the collective observance/performance of religious festivals. In this context Sharda Ashtami and Samohik Shivratri are two main festivals worth mentioning. People from all walks of life participate in these programme, and benefit there from. Accomplished saints and well-versed scholars are invited in these programmes to enlighten the public. In addition to holding a Yagnya, two personages devoted to community cause and service are honoured on Sharda Ashtami with Sharda Puraskar. So far 12 persons have been so honoured as an acknowledgement of community's gratitude. A calendar is released to the public on the occasion of Maha Shiva Ratri.

Teaching and popularizing the original script of Kashmir Sharda is one of the committed activities of Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra. Classes are held of and on for the purpose. Occasional arrangements are made for imparting training in Sanskrit including spoken Sanskrit.

In furtherance of efforts in preservation of culture and ethos publication of books on various aspects has been undertaken. Two monographs "Sharda" and "Herath-Akh-Zaan" have already been published in the **Sharda Granth Mala** Series. Two more monographs "Kshemendra" and "Umanagri" have been released on Sharda Ashtami (11th September 2005). Prof. Bushan Lal Koul's "Parmanand" has also been released. The books on "Krishen Joo Razdan" by Prof. B.L.Koul and on "Lalleshwari" by Prof. Chaman Lal Raina are being released on 18th February 2007 (During Shivratri Samohik Programme). The work on the publication of other titles is in progress. The publication division has also brought out introductory sheets on Shriya Bhatt, Lalitadatya and Guru Teg Bahadur.

A picture gallery is being developed in which the photographs of saints as well as eminent men and women of Kashmir will be displayed. Already thirty such photographs have been installed. Prof. T.N Shalla, President of the Kendra evinced a keen interest in the creation of this picture gallery without his inspiration it would have not materialised.

From last year a scholarship named 'Mohani Jnan Arjan' scholarship has been awarded to three meritorious girls who excelled in studies despite financial constraints. Special cash award was given to them under this scholarship.

The Kendra is planning to start a lecture series in different parts of the state in which light will be thrown on the various aspects of culture and social life of Kashmiri Pandits. The aim is to connect the young people of the community to the age-old traditions and customs.

Sanjeevani Sharda Kendra is run by a registered trust under whose direction all activites are conducted by an

executive headed by an elected Chairman. Several committees have been formed to look after the different activities in a systematic manner. The committees are:

1. Vocation Training Committee
2. Social Reform and Cultural Committee
3. Construction and fund Committee
4. Festival Committee
5. Research and Library Committee

All Committees are active in their allotted field and are working overtime to make the Kendra a vibrant Cultural Centre.

Dr. Chaman Lal Raina is an outstanding philosopher, profound thinker, and a gentleman in every sense of the word. I'm delighted to be able to convey my deep sense of respect for Dr. Rain's scholarly ability to his reading audience. Dr. Rain's linguistic acumen, his breadth of knowledge, and his foundation in philosophical scholarship makes his interpretation of the **Shiva Yohini Lalleshvari** most poignant. What all thinking men are seeking is the "Why" and "What for" of our existence. Dr. Raina understands the Shiva Consciousness as the vehicle for getting to the ontological. The nature of being, for Dr. Raina, is the monistic Shiva, in totality. Please enjoy this intellectual journey.

Gregory Olson
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Florida International University, USA.